The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian.

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Notes of the Month.

THE Tenth Annual Conference of Sunday School Teachers and others interested in the religious training of the young will be held in the First Presbyterian Church, Downpatrick, on Saturday, 5th June. The chair will be taken at 3-10 p.m. by the President, the Rev. Dr. Mellone, and three ten-minutes' papers will be read by Mr. H. Percy Andrews, Comber; Miss Patterson, Holywood; and Rev. G. J. Slipper, Moneyrea. The subject of the papers will be "Our Aim as Sunday School Teachers," and the reading of the papers will be followed by discussion. The Conference will close at 4-50 o'clock, when a substantial tea will be provided by the Downpatrick Congregation, assisted by the neighbouring congregations of Ballee, Clough and Rademon. Taking it all round it ought to result as one of the best conferences yet held, and we have seen some good ones. The readers of the papers will know their subject; and the fact that the hospitality is in the hands of Co. Down friends leaves nothing further to be said upon that point. We hope for a fine day and a large attendance.

If the interest of our readers in the movement for establishing a Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church in Ireland needed an additional stimulus it might be found in a perusal of the recent proceedings of other Nonconformist bodies. Just as we are feeling the necessity of closer co-operation and mutual help in our work, so the same needs are finding expression amongst the Baptists and Congregationalists of England. Like ourselves, they have stood in the past for the liberty of the individual congregation, but now are realising that something further is desirable if the general body is to make progress. This feeling in the case of the first-named has suggested a scheme to raise £150,000 for a general Sustentation Fund. But it is not merely the question of improving the stipends of ministers which prompts such a scheme. It is felt amongst the Baptists that many of the pastorates have been too long, and that the churches have fre-

quently suffered thereby. Hence it is suggested in the scheme which was approved by the Baptist Union that each pastorate should nominally cease at the end of seven years, it being then open to ministers and congregations to continue together if that was deemed desirable. In the case of ministers who, after such a period of probation, proved unsuitable for the work of the ministry, steps should be taken to provide them with some secular employment, but until that were done they should be entitled to support from the General Fund while without regular pulpits. The complete scheme further looks to the more efficient preparation of the students for their important ministerial duties, but that part has been referred to the heads of the different colleges for consideration. Although some considerable time may elapse before practical effect is given to the above proposal, it is a significant sign of the time that a large majority were in favour of its going forward.

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More recently still the May meetings of the Congregational Union dealt with an important scheme which, if not so complete as that indicated above, contemplates the raising of no less a sum than £250,000. This has in view a two-fold object: (1) the better support, (2) the better equipment, of the ministry. For the accomplishing of the first, and in order to raise the minimum stipend of ministers to £120 a year, the capital sum of £250,000 is necessary. Judging by the practical support accorded the proposal both by laymen and ministers, and the further fact that it evoked the greatest enthusiasm and was most cordially carried, the hopes of the proposers should be fully realised. It would seem as if the logic of events were too powerful for even the stalwart Independents who, but a few years ago, opposed a somewhat similar scheme submitted by Dr. Joseph Parker, when President of the Congregational Union. Surely we who in our Presbyterian churches know the value of co-operation will let it appear that wise and carefully-planned proposals for more efficient organisation will have our practical support when the time arrives! But the Congregationalists perceive clearly enough that if a General Sustentation Fund is to raise the financial status of the ministers it will demand that its grants are paid only to the ministers it deems efficient. Hence the second object is to see that admission into the ministry is made increasingly difficult if not impossible to men who have received no proper training or show no special aptitude for the work.

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In the middle of last month Florence Nightingale entered into her ninetieth year, and it was gratifying to note that May 15th prompted hosts of admirers to send their good wishes and congratulations to the noble-minded woman whose devoted work is still remembered far and wide. More than half a century has elapsed since her splendid example gave so great an inpetus to the profession of the trained nurse, and impelled many to give themselves up to the same Christian labours. When we think of all which that implies—the alleviation of suffering, the brightening and uplifting of the sad and despairing, the soothing of the last hours of the dying—we can only trust that Miss Nightingale in her declining years will feel all the joy of self-sacrifice, and the full satisfaction vouchsafed to any who can so truly declare, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

THE STORY OF CREATION.

By Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A., D.Sc.

III.

WE have seen that the Bible story of Creation has a human and a divine side. To forget or deny its human side—in other words, to assume that every statement in it is a word of God—is to bring it into direct conflict with historical or scientific fact. To forget or deny its divine side is to be blind to its religious value.

We saw what is meant by speaking of its "religious value," when we compared it with the Babylonian creation-story. The Bible does not teach that the world arose out of the age-long strife of many warring gods; still less that it made itself or came out of nothing. The Bible begins with the great thought of One infinite and almighty Will and Wisdom.

All true science confirms this, in so far as it shows that Nature is *trustworthy*. By saying that Nature is trustworthy, I mean that the more we find out about Nature's ways the more we find they can be trusted; she operates in ways that we can understand, so that we can guide our action by our knowledge. The "laws of Nature"—as scientific men are accustomed to put it—are constant; and the laws of Nature are none other than the laws of God. All the scientific discoveries, all the inventions which have made such a difference to the world, have been possible only because men have searched out these laws according to which the Divine Creative Power always works; they have attained to the knowledge of many of these laws; and they have used the knowledge to guide their action. The electric energy, which shows itself in the thunderstorm as regardless of man's wishes, and sometimes as destructive of his works and his life, is a power which works according to invariable laws—invariable "habits" of action, so to speak. And because many of these laws or habits of action of the electric energy have been discovered, man has been able to make it into his obedient servant; and so the marvels of the telegraph, the telephone and the electric power-station are commonplace things now.

Where Nature appears not trustworthy, but arbitrary, inconstant, and destructive, it is because we do not understand the real causes which are acting there; and so we cannot foresee or control their effects.

The Bible story introduces the idea of creation as a series of steps or stages, divided into six "days." Each of these stages fulfils the divine Will—that is, it does not come by chance, or as the result of blind forces; it comes as part of a great Plan and Purpose. Nothing in modern knowledge supports the notion of chance or blind force; nothing compels us to deny the great Plan and Purpose; we are only compelled to reject the six days, and to affirm that the stages of God's creative work are vastly longer and more complicated than was thought. The beginning ever recedes, the further back our questions are pressed. We are driven back, verse by verse, from the story of six days of creation; and science carries her questions back through incalculable ages of time; but at last we have to rest in the thought expressed in the Bible story before the "days" have begun to exist: "The Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the deep." There was no "day" when the Spirit of God descended to brood upon the waters for the first time; there was no "day" when the creative energy ceased to work; not one day nor six did God labour in making the world fit for man's dwelling-place, but—as Jesus said to those who spoke to him of the Sabbath, on which it was written that God rested from all his work—"the Father worketh even until now."

The last word of science and philosophy to-day is this: if there have been no moments of supernatural interference with the course of nature, it is only because the interference was constant and natural, and because nature could not be without God.

REFLECTIONS ON THE TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE.

By an Irish Delegate.

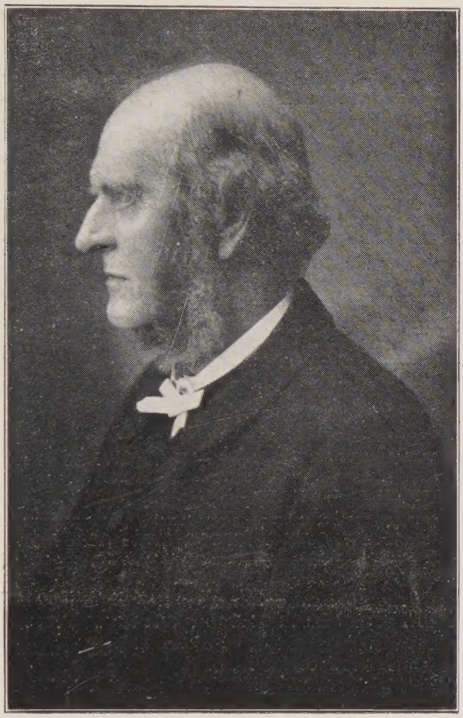
AN Irish Unitarian finding himself in the midst of a Triennial Conference of Unitarian, Liberal Christian, Free Christian, Presbyterian, and other Non-Subscribing or kindred Congregations has many sensations. The writer has already had an oppor-

tunity of attending three such gatherings—Leicester, Liverpool and Bolton—and at one and all he has been most forcibly impressed with the fact that Unitarianism is neither dead nor dying. It will be seen from the reports of the various organisations, as contained in the *Inquirer* of 24th April, and 1st May, that the members of our faith are an important factor in the religious and social work of England. The most diverse topics were discussed at Bolton, including questions of Theology, Church Government, and problems relating to the happiness and welfare of mankind, and the large attendances bore conclusive proof to the keen interest with which the different topics were regarded, while the intellectual thought of the various speakers showed a deep insight into and a careful study of the problems presented.

When one reflects on the devotional aspect of the Conference, words entirely fail to convey an adequate conception of the spirit of worship of those attending the meetings. The thorough heartiness of the congregational singing was a thing to be remembered. What a contrast to the singing, or rather absence of singing, of our congregations ! But one must bear in mind that the tunes selected for the Bolton Conference were the good old tunes—such as *Rockingham* and *Melcombe* of the 18th century—with which everyone is acquainted from childhood, and not the new fangled tunes which few know, and which often rob a lovely hymn of much of its beauty. The writer has often thought that if our churches would devote their attention to a few of the old familiar tunes there would be a greater participation in the congregational singing, and thus a deeper spirit of public worship.

As an outcome of the Conference, and the happy association of meeting old friends and renewing former acquaintances, the fact has been further impressed upon the writer that we, in Ireland, want greater facilities of coming more closely in contact with each other, and of occasionally joining in a common worship. Would it not be possible to have a Triennial Conference of Irish Unitarians in Belfast ? Such a gathering would instil more activity into our different congregations scattered through-out the country. We have a glorious cause to uphold—combining the Service of Man with the Worship of God—but we want a little more enthusiasm. As the President of the Conference said at Bolton, " There is a life which is larger than that of the individual, it is the life of society, the life of co-operation, the life of the Church." The importance of this statement cannot be too strongly urged upon Irish Unitarians, for it must not be ignored that the life of the Church is of paramount importance. English ministers flit across the scene here in Ireland leaving their impress for good, or the reverse, in the work of the Unitarian Church, but each congregation has a history, and it is only by the combined effort of the members in regarding the traditions as a sacred heritage that the vitality of the congregation can be preserved. How often do we find young ministers coming to us with a professed belief that Irishmen should have a greater control in the management of their own affairs, and during their few years' residence in Ireland they spare no efforts to supplant old established customs with others that are the outcome of their English training ? There is no occasion for another English plantation of Ulster. What the Irish Unitarian Church most needs at the present moment is a development of responsibility on the part of each member, and a greater individual interest in the welfare of the Church. This is not to be attained by an undue exercise of ministerial authority in Church government. Such misplaced zeal—in many cases with the best intentions—has produced and is producing an indifference in our members which too often results in a severance from our ranks. Let us take a lesson from the past and make an united effort to remove the cause of this growing indifference, for as Rev. James Harwood said at Bolton, " Our churches

are commonly credited with containing men of more than average ability and character, and *it is they whom we must enlist in larger numbers in the service of those churches.*"



REV. H. E. DOWSON, B.A.,
Gee Cross.
(The new President of the National Triennial Conference.)

It is with pleasure we are enabled to reproduce here a picture of Rev. H. E. Dowson, the new President of the Triennial Conference. Mr. Dowson commenced his studies for the ministry in the year 1857. For three or four years he was co-Pastor in the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham. In 1867 he was appointed Minister at Gee Cross, near Manchester, where he still ministers. Mr. Dowson is a large man with a large heart, the kind of man we should make a bishop of if we were in the habit of making bishops, and we wish him health and strength to perform the arduous duties of his term of office.

RADEMON (1st KILMORE) CONGREGATION.

By REV. JOHN ALEXANDER KELLY.

[NOTE.—*This was written for the "Disciple," where it appeared in the May number of 1883. By request the Author has now revised and brought it up to date for this paper.*]

LIST OF MINISTERS.

1. **THOMAS ELDER, M.A.(Edin.)** 1716—1727

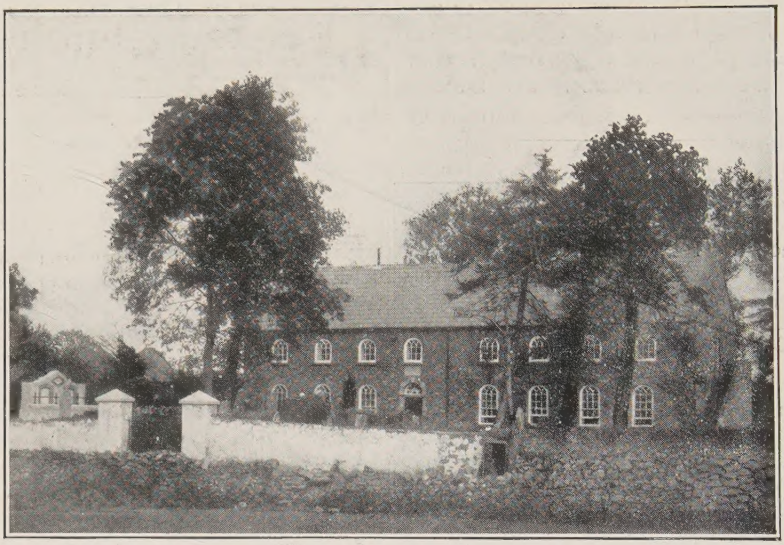
[Born in Ireland of Scottish parents about 1677. Ordained at First Ballyrashane, 3rd October, 1700. Installed at Whithorn, 5th September, 1704. Installed at Kilmore by Down Presbytery on 14th June, 1716. Allowed in 1725 to join the new Presbytery of Bangor "if he pleases." Installed at Portpatrick on 2nd May, 1727. Installed at Leswalt on 2nd February, 1731. Died in February or March, 1733, aged about 56].

2. **SAMUEL FERGIE** ... 1728—1765

[Born 1686. Native of the Barony of Ards. Probationer under care of Killyleagh Presbytery. Ordained at Rademon, in his 43rd year, by Bangor Presbytery, 23rd October, 1728. Early in his ministry, a Second Meeting-house, thatched, was built, the former one having become unfit for worship. Died 3rd May, 1765].

3. **MOSES NEILSON (or NELSON), D.D.** 1767—1823

[Born 1737. Probationer of Presbytery of Strabane. Ordained at Rademon, 8th April, 1767. Present Meeting-house built in 21st year of his ministry, 1787. Died 23rd April, 1823, in his 86th year. Author of sermon on "The Light of Nature." Dr. Neilson established the Rademon Academy. Thirty or forty Parish Priests, many Presbyterian Ministers, and Doctors of Medicine received instruction here under Dr. Neilson and his sons. For some years before his death he was perfectly blind, and yet able to conduct the highest classes in the school, and frequently preached and lectured, his son Arthur reading the portions of scripture. During his blindness, his son William Neilson, D.D., Professor of Hebrew and Headmaster of the Classical Department in the Belfast Academical Institution, having died, he conducted the classes till a successor was appointed. Of his seven sons, four were educated for the ministry. James Nelson, D.D., of Downpatrick, father of the late Rev. Samuel Craig Nelson, M.A.; William Neilson, D.D., originally minister at Dundalk; Robert, who gave up the ministry, and became a physician at Newtownards, where he attended the first Marquis of Londonderry; Arthur (see below). Of the other three sons, two became M.D.'s, and one a farmer, who died in Canada, leaving a son in the ministry.]



RADEMON: FIRST KILMORE REMONSTRANT CHURCH.

4. **ARTHUR NELSON** ... 1810—1831

[Son of the preceding. Probationer under care of Antrim Presbytery. Ordained June 10th, 1810, at Rademon, by Armagh Presbytery. Died June 20th, 1831. One of the founders of the Remonstrant Synod, to which body the congregation attached itself, having, October 4th, 1829, by unanimous vote, severed its connection with the Synod of Ulster. In 1831 disputes arose, and the secession of a Calvinistic section was the result.]

5. **WILLIAM CROZIER, M.A.** 1832—1872

[Eldest son of Brice Crozier, of Stramore, Gilford, Co. Down. Born at Ballynahinch (in the house of his maternal grandfather, James Armstrong, Esq.), February 1st, 1797. Attended school of Rev. Mr. Sherrard, Tullylish. One of his school-fellows, being his second cousin, F. R. M. Crozier, afterwards Captain, R.N., was second in command in the fatal Franklin Expedition. Afterwards at Rademon Academy. Graduated M.A. in Glasgow University, 1816. Licensed by Dromore Presbytery, 1819. In 1822, while still a probationer, employed in Connaught Mission at Westport. Ordained at Clonmel July 8th, 1825, by Synod of Munster. In 1820, owing to his bold advocacy of New Light doctrines, and circulating "Drummond on the Trinity," a large party left Clonmel Congregation. In reference to this case, Rev. James Martineau, then of Eustace Street, Dublin, preached his sermon "Peace in Division." Installed at Rademon September 21st, 1832, by Armagh Presbytery. Resigned in 1872. Died May 22nd, 1873, at the manse of his son, Rev. J. A. Crozier, B.A., Newry, and buried on the 26th at Magheradroll, near Ballynahinch. Moderator of the Remonstrant Synod in 1837 and 1853; President of the Non-Subscribing Association, 1857.]

6. **JAMES KENNEDY** ... 1869—1878

[Educated in Belfast. Ordained at Rademon, 30th March, 1869, by Armagh Presbytery. Resigned November 1st, 1878, to become minister at Larne].

7. **BARNARD GISBY** ... 1879—1880

[Educated at Bristol Congregational Institute. Congregational Minister at Chelmsford. Became minister of Free Christian Church, King's Lynn, 18th March, 1877. Installed at Rademon March 31st, 1879, by Bangor Presbytery. Resigned 1st August, 1880.]

8. **JOHN ALEXANDER KELLY** 1880—1896

[Educated in Manchester (U.H.M.C. and Owens). Ordained at Rademon on 19th October, 1880, by Bangor Presbytery. Resigned to become minister at Dunmurry, where he was installed by Bangor Presbytery on 23rd July, 1896. During this ministry, four acres of land were acquired, a fine manse and offices built thereupon, the total cost being about £1,500.]

9. **JOHN JOSEPH MACILL, B.A.** 1896—

[Educated in Queen's College, Belfast, and U.H.M. College, Manchester. Ordained in Newtownards on 16th August, 1894, by the Antrim Presbytery. Resigned to become minister of Rademon, where he was installed by the Bangor Presbytery on the 27th November, 1896].

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

According to the best account attainable, it appears that the first Protestant dissenting meeting-house was built in the townland of Rademon and parish of Kilmore in the year 1713. Before this time, such Presbyterians as resided in the district attended public worship in the congregation of Ballynahinch, in the records of which the births and marriages of the people of Kilmore were entered.

The Presbyterians of Kilmore, being at an inconvenient distance from Ballynahinch, and withal numerous and respectable, determined to build a house for the purpose of Presbyterian worship in their own parish. This determination having been carried out, and the congregation having placed itself under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Down, Rev. Thomas Elder was chosen and installed to the pastoral charge. It seems that a number of members of the Saintfield congregation, residing in the neighbourhood, also attached themselves to this new formation, thereby causing great dissatisfaction to be expressed by their former fellow-worshippers.

The site of this, the first meeting-house, was nearly the same as that of the present; being on one of the extreme verges of the estate of the Johnstone family, now in the possession of a family deservedly popular, the Crawfords of Crawfordsburn. It is not known by what tenure the ground was originally held from the landlord. At present it is secured by lease in perpetuity, for the rent of three peppercorns per annum.

It appears that this house was not built on any very extensive scale, and that its existence did not extend beyond a term of ten years. Whether the shortness of its duration was due to its want of size, to the materials used, or the workmanship, is not known. Of Mr. Elder's ministry there seems not to exist any detailed account. It is certain, however, that it did not last longer than the first meeting-house.

(*To be continued.*)

For the Children.

By A Sunday School Teacher.

HELEN KELLER.

I WANT to tell you about a little American girl, who is now grown up; her name is Helen Keller. She was born on the 27th June, 1880, and she was a splendid healthy little baby till she was a year and seven months old, when she had a sudden and very severe illness from which the doctors thought she could not recover, but which left her as suddenly as it came—but left her never to see or hear again.

Can you imagine what this would mean, if it were your own case? Fancy having to learn all your lessons, and having to *see* this wonderful world and the mysteries of nature, without the help of your eyes and ears. Yet, thanks to her splendid teacher, and to her own perseverance and cleverness, that is what little Helen did.

Helen was six years and nine months old when Miss Sullivan came to teach her; her mind was unawakened, and she could not find out all the things an eager child wants to know because she knew not words and could not "talk," with her fingers, though she could make some signs which her own family understood.

Miss Sullivan taught her the alphabet, only instead of learning to *say* "A B C" as we do, and then to *see* and recognise the letters, she learnt to *make* the letters with her fingers, and to *feel* and recognise the raised type in her books.

When she had grasped the fact that there was a name for everything round about her, and that she could learn these names by means of the finger alphabet, the clouds that shut her off from companionship with others began to break.

Miss Sullivan was an ideal teacher, and Helen herself says: "All my early

lessons have in them the breath of the words—the fine resinous odour of pine needles blended with the perfume of wild grapes; I learned to think that everything has a lesson and a suggestion." Only a year after Miss Sullivan came to her, Helen began to keep a journal, and you will see what progress she had made from the following extract from it, written before she was eight :—

" I got up, washed my face and hands, combed my hair, picked three dew violets for teacher, and ate my breakfast. After breakfast I played with dolls short. Nancy was cross. Cross is cry and kick. I read in my book about large fierce animals. Fierce is much cross, and strong, and very hungry. I do not love fierce animals. I wrote letter to Uncle James. He is doctor. Doctor makes sick girl well. I do not like sick. Then I ate my dinner. I like much ice cream very much."

When Helen was nine, she began regular lessons in arithmetic, geography, zoology, botany, and reading. One day she was very puzzled about her arithmetic and her teacher proposed that she should leave it for a bit, and go for a walk ; she replied, shaking her head, " My enemies would think I was running away ; I must stay and conquer them now." And so she did.

It was this spirit that made her able to overcome all difficulties, she simply *would not be beaten*, and in the end she was able to graduate and go through college, taking Latin, Greek, French, German, Mathematics and English.

When asked, as a child, why she loved books so much she answered, " Because they tell me so much that is interesting about things I cannot see, and they are never tired or troubled like people. They tell me over and over what I want to know."

It is impossible in my short space to give you any idea of what a cheery, contented little girl Helen was, always seeing the good in everything, even in her own affliction. I will conclude by quoting what she says about herself when she was only twelve years old :—

" After all, sight and hearing are but two of the beautiful blessings which God had given me. The most precious, the most wonderful of His gifts, was still mine—my mind remained clear and active ' Though fled for e'er the light.' "

OBITUARY.

Miss Eliza Johnston.

The congregations of Downpatrick and Rademon suffered a severe loss on Thursday, May 6th, in the passing away of Miss Eliza Johnston, at Ballywoollen House, the home of her ancestors. She fell victim to an attack of influenza. In the course of a very touching address at the graveside in Killyleagh, the Rev. James Kennedy, of Larne, said :—

" Her charity to the needy was generous but unostentatious ; for she did not cause her voice to be heard in the street ; while in her home or in the homes of others, the gentle graces of a refined and dignified womanhood won the chivalrous homage and warm affection of all. There is something unusually touching in her rather sudden passing on. Coming but recently from her home in Downpatrick to the home of her ancestors in Ballywoollen to join in the golden wedding festivities of Mr. and Mrs. Davidson, she has been called to enter into the joy of her Lord in the Home beyond time and change. But she lived in that joy—the joy of her Lord—here in this world, by going about in her own gentle, unobtrusive way doing good, speaking kindly, helping generously, in the trivial round and common task of daily life and every-day duty, living and acting so far as in her lay according to the mind and spirit and temper of Jesus Christ her Lord."

Mr. Henry M'Robert, Market Square, Ballynahinch, will be glad to receive *The Disciple* for March and June, 1883, to complete his set.

Scheme of Systematic Instruction for Sunday Schools, 1909-10.

I.—JUNIOR GRADE (Suggested ages, 8-11 inclusive).

(*a*) *Old Test.* (1) Ten Commandments (Ex. xx. 1-17).
(2) Ps. 63.
(3) Story of Moses: Early Part (Ex. i.—v. inclusive).

(*b*) *New Test.* (1) Parable of the Sower (Matt. xiii. 1-23).
(2) Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke xv. 11-32).

(*c*) *General*: Hymns (to be committed to memory)—
(1) "Onward Christian Soldiers."
(2) "Lead us, Heavenly Father."
(3) "Nearer, my God, to Thee."

II.—MIDDLE GRADE (Suggested ages, 12-14 inclusive).

(*a*) *Old Test.* (1) Deut. xxx. 11-20.
(2) I. Chrons. xvi. 7-36.
(3) Isaiah lv.

(*b*) *New Test.* The Parables in Luke.

(*c*) *General.* Christian Catechism, Part II. *or* III.

III.—SENIOR GRADE (Suggested ages, 15 and upwards).

(*a*) *Old Test.* (1) The Book of Amos.
(2) Ps. civ.

(*b*) *New Test.* The Story of Paul (Acts viii.-ix., xiii.-xxviii.) *or* The Epistle to the Galatians.

(*c*) *General.* Christian Catechism, Part III. *or* IV.;
or "Our Faith," by W. G. Tarrant;
or "The Bible: What it is and what it is not?" by Joseph Wood;
or "Simple Talks about Religion," by H. W. Hawkes;
or "Life in Palestine," by J. E. Carpenter.

Suggested Books for the Use of Teachers.

General.—"How to Read the Bible." Walter F. Adeney. (London: J. Clark & Co. 1/6).
"The Three Stages of a Bible's Life." W. C. Gannett. (Sunday School Association. 4d. net).
"The Bible for Young People." Trans. from the Dutch by P. H. Wickstead. (S.S. Association. 4 Vols. 10/- net).
[This is suggested as a work of reference for the S.S. Library.]

Books, &c., bearing on the Special Lessons.

OLD TESTAMENT.

Story of Moses. See "Exodus" in the Century Bible. (Edinburgh: T. C. & E. C. Jack. 2/6 net).
See "The Religion of Israel," by A. S. Peake; Chap. i., "The Rise of the Religion." (The Century Bible Handbooks. 6d. net in paper covers; 1/- cloth).

Book of Amos. See "The Religion of Israel," chap. iv., Amos and Hosea (see above).
See "Joel and Amos," by S. R. Driver. (Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges. 2/- net).
See also Sunday School Lessons on Amos, by A. W. Fox, in "Christian Life," January 2nd, 1909—May 15th, 1909.

NEW TESTAMENT.

Parables of Jesus. See "Half-Hours with the Parables." J. C. Hirst, 1st and 2nd Series. (S.S. Association. 1/- each net).
See "Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ," by W. B. Selbie. (The Century Bible Handbooks. See above).

Life of St. Paul. See "St. Paul (Life and Teaching)," by A. E. Garvie. (The Century Bible Handbooks. See above).

The Epistle to the Galatians.—See "The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians," explained and illustrated by James Drummond. (S.S. Association, Cheap Edition. 6d. net).

[An Examination on the above will be held in March, 1910.]

REPORTS.

Ballee.—The Annual Congregational Meeting was held on the evening of the 21st April, when the statements of the Treasurers were presented. It was reported that the sexton's house had been put in proper repair and that the Meeting-house field and graveyard had had various sums expended in doing needful work. The Church Committee was appointed. Mr. Wm. Savage and Mr. Robert M'Cullen, C.E., were appointed Congregational Co-Treasurers, and Mr. H. M'Mechan, Manse Treasurer, with Mr. Robert Caven, Secretary. Votes of thanks were passed unanimously to the officials and Choir. Especial note was made of the long services, as Organist, rendered so efficiently by Mr. Robert M'Cullen. Indeed, ten years ago this gentleman declined to receive payment for his services.

Belfast: York Street.—We learn that the Rev. Alex. O. Ashworth has been obliged through ill-health to resign his charge as Minister of York Street Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church. For some time past his health has been very indifferent, and the lengthy rest from pulpit duties last summer afforded but temporary relief, and now, on the advice of his doctors, he has been compelled to tender his resignation to the Presbytery of Antrim. That body was unwilling to part with him, and asked him to vary his application. This he did, and he is permitted to retire from the active duties of the ministry, but remains senior minister, and the congregation will appoint an assistant and successor with the full benefit of its improved financial position. Mr. Ashworth has been a faithful minister of the Unitarian cause for thirty-nine years. After serving two years as a lay-preacher, he entered the Home Missionary College in 1866; and on the 1st February, 1870, became the Minister of the Chatham Congregation. From thence, he removed in 1872, to Stalybridge, where he remained for eight years. His next charge was at Doncaster, in addition to which he revived the Cause at Thorne, where the church had been closed for ten years, preaching there fortnightly for a considerable period. After ministering at Doncaster for eight years, he accepted an invitation to South Shields, which charge he relinquished at the end of four years to accept the call to York Street, on October 1st, 1891. During the period of nearly eighteen years of his ministry in Belfast, he has devoted much labour towards placing the Church on a sound financial basis. His first effort was to liquidate a debt of £500 which had been incurred on the new buildings, and afterwards raised in two sums, over £300, for the completion of the furnishing, providing a piano and organ, as well as heating apparatus. Two years ago, a sum of £600 was raised to invest and prevent debt on the general account, and recently he had inaugurated a bazaar to raise a further £600 to improve the property, obtain a new organ and meet current repair expenses. As Convener of the S. School Committee of the Association of Irish Non-Subscribing Presbyterians and other Free Christians, which position he has held for 15 years, Mr. Ashworth has rendered most valuable service in this important branch of our work. It was by his interest and organising power that the Annual Conferences of Sunday School Workers were arranged, and the increasing success of these meetings is a fitting tribute to his labours. This office he has also felt obliged to relinquish. We trust that in his retirement from the active work of the ministry he may gather strength, and heartily wish him a speedy recovery to health again.

Holywood.—On Sunday morning, May 2nd, the Annual Distribution of Prizes to the members of the Sunday School took place in the Schoolroom of The First Presbyterian Church. A number of parents and others interested in the children were present, and an excellent address was given by the Rev. Arthur Golland, M.A., of Newport, Monmouthshire. A great many pupils of the School gained prizes, and twelve

of them were presented with the certificates won at the recent examinations held under the auspices of the Sunday Schools Committee of our Association. Two special prizes were awarded to Lily Patty and Tom Wilson, who were not absent a single Sunday during the year. As usual, the children brought bunches of primroses and other beautiful flowers, and these were sent to the Queen Street Hospital for Sick Children, Belfast. A collection was taken in aid of the Sunday School's Cot in this Hospital, and it amounted to £1 1s. 10½d., which was rather more than last year's collection.

The Unity Guild.—The Annual Meeting of this Guild was held on April 28th in the Central Hall, when Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., presided over a medium-sized attendance. The Committee's Report on season's working showed that activities had been well maintained, whilst the Treasurer's Balance Sheet had still a balance on the right side, even although the usual surplus from the Annual Dance was not forthcoming. Regret was expressed at the approaching departure from our ranks of Rev. W. H. Drummond, B.A., and Dr. Mellone, both of whom had rendered service to the Guild, the former being one of the founders, whilst the latter has lectured before the members. Rev. J. A. Kelly was unanimously chosen as President for 1909-10, while Messrs. E. R. Jackson and Geo. J. Hill were re-elected to the offices of Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer. It was decided in view of the success that attended last summer's Excursions to have four during the present season, the dates recommended being May 22nd, June 26th, August 7th, and September 4th, the venues being provisionally fixed as Helen's Tower, Ballycarry, Crumlin and Hillsboro'. The Annual Service was held in York Street Church on Sunday, May 16th, when Rev. J. A. Kelly conducted the service. In the course of his remarks, the preacher said that owing perhaps to the pressing influences of the present day we were apt to forget to record in our book of memory the past benefits we had received, and that we were thus unable to carry out the Psalmist's injunctions because we have no melody in our souls to enable us to burst into a song of praise. He pointed out that the City's Motto, *Pro Tanto Quid Retribuamus*, which so frequently met our eyes in our walks abroad, should cause us to remember that we had special blessings to be thankful for; things that stand out in history—great ancestors theologically and spiritually—legacies not to be squandered but to be used as a working basis for advancing higher. He appealed to the younger members of the Guild not to rest on their oars, but as the past was glorious make the present so, and the future more so, by taking more interest in the different matters appertaining to their various congregations, and thus leave their minister with more liberty to give his best thoughts to his pulpit work; it was impossible for him to do this if he had to be both the captain on the bridge and the man before the mast."

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